

International Trade

- [Overview](#)
- [What NAFTA and Unfair Trade Has Done to Our Region](#)
- [Proposed Korea Free Trade Agreement](#)
- [House Trade Working Group](#)
- [Expanding Trade Adjustment Assistance \(TAA\)](#)
- [Trade and Immigration](#)
- [Legislation](#)

I have been fighting for a “fair trade” policy since I became a Member of Congress.

I was proud to lead the House efforts to defeat the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and most favored nation trade status for Communist China.

We are now seeing the results of a failed federal trade policy: shuttered factories, depleted tax bases, and families out of work.

Remember when NAFTA promised us millions of good jobs? Instead, we got the giant sucking sound of jobs leaving America.

NAFTA and similar agreements have devastated our great manufacturing sector, which has lost a third of its workers since 1994 as they are forced to compete on an unlevel playing field.

Multinational corporations are taking advantage of low-wage platforms in China, Mexico and other nations. Meanwhile, state-managed capitalist enterprises in nations such as Japan, Germany, and South Korea keep out American-made products.

It's time to wake up, stand up for our country, and renegotiate those trade agreements that move our jobs offshore.

What Unfair Trade Has Done to Our Region

Working together, our businesses and labor organizations built Northern Ohio into an industrial powerhouse - always standing up for America, whether in war or peace.

Springing from the rich soils of the former Great Black Swamp, our farms combined with businesses and industries to form a diversified economy in the crossroads of America. That economy has weathered many economic storms, only to come back with even more vigor. Now, at the dawn of the 21st Century, the economy of Northern Ohio faces even greater challenges.

Unfair trade agreements like NAFTA are draining the economic lifeblood of our region. Unbalanced federal trade deficits have saddled future generations with staggering amounts of debt and drastically reduced their range of opportunities. Unequal funding formulas have denied many Ohio schoolchildren of an adequate education and threatened our economic future.

America's working men and working women and their families deserve a government that takes their side, not the side of big money. They deserve fair trade agreements that produce a level economic playing field, not a race to the bottom. They deserve fiscal responsibility, not budget and trade deficits for as far as the eye can see.

Proposed Korea Free Trade Agreement

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President Obama has signaled his interest in fixing the flawed Korea agreement so that it does not harm America's autoworkers and cattle ranchers. Korea has never been willing, however, to open its doors to American products in the auto sector. Our exports to Korea are minuscule; meanwhile, Kia and Hyundai enjoy untrammelled access to the U.S. consumer market, the largest in the world.

Unfortunately, the proposed Korea agreement follows the broken model by granting to foreign investors the same rights as in the NAFTA agreement. It also contains what Global Trade Watch has called "the strongest dose of financial regulation ever contained in a U.S. trade pact."

We must not sit back and allow Korean companies to attack as unfair trade practices those U.S. laws that protect our environment, our health, and our financial system.

The House Trade Working Group

Congresswoman Kaptur belongs to the bipartisan House Trade Working Group, which fights for a fair trade policy for American workers. The group has pushed forward-looking trade policy and has organized efforts against unfair trade deals. It organizes press conferences, introduces legislation, briefings, letters, and other initiatives to fight for fairer trade agreements.

Expanding Trade Adjustment Assistance

Congresswoman Kaptur has been a consistent champion of Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), which provides job training and other assistance to workers who have been laid off due to trade. She is a strong advocate for full funding of all of the TAA programs, including TAA for Workers, TAA for Firms, and the new TAA for Communities program, which will allow areas to receive federal funding to develop a strategy to diversify and strengthen their economy.

Trade and Immigration

America's immigration system is broken and in serious need of comprehensive overhaul. The continental trading relationship between the people of the Americas is also broken. The fact that the U.S. has an estimated 10 million or more undocumented immigrants can be directly attributed to flawed trade agreements, most notably NAFTA and its omission of humane adjustment provisions for Mexico's workers.

Displaced U.S. workers represent the other harmed party. These harsh trade, agricultural, and economic policies largely benefit global corporations while devaluing human life, the worth of work, principles of equality, and just treatment under the rule of law for the people of the Americas.

Millions of uprooted immigrants risk their lives crossing the U.S.-Mexico border region, in search of the American Dream. Millions of U.S. citizens find their standard of living dropping as living wage jobs with benefits are outsourced to Mexico and other nations where half the population exists on \$4 per day. Only when these flawed trade deals are renegotiated will the root causes of America's immigration problem be resolved.

Legislation I Have Cosponsored

H.RES.444 : Expressing the Sense of Congress that the United States needs an industrial policy with regard to automobile, aerospace, shipping, and steel industries, which are vital to national and economic security. Sponsor: Rep Kucinich, Dennis J. [OH-10] (introduced 5/14/2009)

H.RES.997 : Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding unfair and discriminatory practices of the government of Japan in its failure to apply its current and planned extension of the Government's Eco-friendly Vehicle Purchase and scrappage program to imported vehicles made by U.S. automakers. Sponsor: Rep Sutton, Betty [OH-13]

H.R.1874 : Patriot Corporations of America Act of 2009 Sponsor: Rep Schakowsky, Janice D. [IL-9] (introduced 4/2/2009)

H.R.1875 : End the Trade Deficit Act Sponsor: Rep DeFazio, Peter A. [OR-4] (introduced 4/2/2009)

H.R.2067 : Protecting America's Workers Act Sponsor: Rep Woolsey, Lynn C. [CA-6] (introduced 4/23/2009)

H.R.2378 : Currency Reform for Fair Trade Act Sponsor: Rep Ryan, Tim [OH-17] (introduced 5/13/2009)

H.R.2927 : Border Tax Equity Act of 2009 Sponsor: Rep Pascrell, Bill, Jr. [NJ-8] (introduced 6/17/2009)

H.R.3012 : TRADE Act of 2009 Sponsor: Rep Michaud, Michael H. [ME-2] (introduced 6/24/2009) .

H.R.3034 : Investment in American Steel Act of 2009 Sponsor: Rep Wilson, Charles A. [OH-6] (introduced 6/24/2009)

H.R.3042 : Forewarn Act Sponsor: Rep Miller, George [CA-7] (introduced 6/25/2009)

H.R.3116 : Berry Amendment Extension Act Sponsor: Rep Kissell, Larry [NC-8] (introduced 7/7/2009)

H.R.3786 : Reciprocal Market Access Act of 2009 Sponsor: Rep Slaughter, Louise McIntosh [NY-28] (introduced 10/8/2009)

H.R.4351 : Buy American Improvement Act of 2009 Sponsor: Rep Lipinski, Daniel [IL-3] (introduced 12/16/2009)

H.R.4650 : Stop Outsourcing Security Act Sponsor: Rep Schakowsky, Janice D. [IL-9] (introduced 2/23/2010)

H.R.4678 : Foreign Manufacturers Legal Accountability Act of 2010 Sponsor: Rep Sutton, Betty [OH-13] (introduced 2/24/2010)

H.R.4692 : National Manufacturing Strategy Act of 2010 Sponsor: Rep Lipinski, Daniel [IL-3] (introduced 2/25/2010)

H.R.4759 : To provide for the withdrawal of the United States from the North American Free Trade Agreement. Sponsor: Rep Taylor, Gene [MS-4] (introduced 3/4/2010)

H.R.4788 : Aviation Jobs Outsourcing Prevention Act Sponsor: Rep Bishop, Timothy H. [NY-1] (introduced 3/9/2010)

H.R.4812 : Local Jobs for America Act Sponsor: Rep Miller, George [CA-7] (introduced 3/10/2010)

H.R.5312 : Reciprocal Government Procurement with China Creates American Jobs Act Sponsor: Rep Schauer, Mark H. [MI-7] (introduced 5/13/2010)

H.R.5393 : Textile Enforcement and Security Act of 2010 Sponsor: Rep Kissell, Larry [NC-8] (introduced 5/25/2010)

H.R.5792 : Manufacture Renewable Energy Systems: Make it in America Act of 2010 Sponsor: Rep Garamendi, John [CA-10] (introduced 7/20/2010)

H.R.5793 : Close Foreign Tax Loopholes: Make it in America Act of 2010 Sponsor: Rep Garamendi, John [CA-10]